

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter provides the overview of the research. This chapter is divided into six sections. They include the brief discussed of background of study, research question, objectives, significances, and limitation of conducting the research.

1.1. Background of the Study

English, for long time, is already known as an important subject to develop quality and professionalism of human resource. Not only as international language but in particular aspect field also believes English as an *intranational* language, due to English supporting some internal aspect (Alfehaid, 2011) such there are much information, books and journals published in English as a source in education field in several un-English un-Native English speaker of some countries with local context. The needs of English increase specifically nowadays, such as English for business communication, technical writing, journalistic English, or academic presentation skills which it often aims to train students on a specific genre or to use English in a specific discipline or a particular communicative context (Liu, Chang, Yang & Sun, 2011). For this phenomenon, English in the end becomes a crucial subject in the university as requirement to graduate.

The phenomenon above draws the example of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) phenomenon, an old approach to design English course or in

specific words “an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner’s reason for learning” (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p.19). According to that Thus, ESP practitioners need to design a course, a syllabus as well, based on needs of varieties of major in the University.

The reasons to have a syllabus such as that the syllabus is a manageable unit of what English as a language need to be learnt, and that language cannot be learnt in one go, reveal how important the syllabus is. A well good/proper written syllabus provides information, anticipates questions, presents logistical information and conveys the tone and philosophy of the learning environment (Nunan, 1988). Regarding to meet specific learners, a syllabus provides particular explanations of the importance of taking the course, the objective of course and the purpose of activities in class (Hyland, 2006).

In developing an ESP syllabus, however, there are three approaches as consideration; language centered approach, skill centered approach, and learner centered approach (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). The centered approach refers to what the language component needed. This approach is the “crystalitation of what the course is all about”. However, the skill approach role in the writing syllabus is that the syllabus should provide the opportunities for learner to employ and evaluate the language skills. For learning-centered approach, the content is beyond of learning activities. The other characteristic of this approach is that the methodology consideration is important. In other world, it is not only both the content of what should be learnt and the skills should be evaluated, but also the

activity through which it is learned. In writing syllabus, furthermore, these three approaches similarly start the activity by needs analysis but the further focus after that is different.

Additionally, as learning centered perspectives syllabus, generally the syllabus should describe the course including goals and objectives, clear explanation of assessments and evaluation, activities and process of learning, and what, when, and where the learning will happen (O'Brien, Millis, & Cohen, 2008). This kind of syllabus is, then, definitely called as learning centered syllabus. The syllabus focuses on students' side and the methodology. The syllabus also should be more creative in its language elements rather than the teacher centered syllabus in which the students strangely understand the contents in the syllabus.

In this research, the researchers developed the learning centered syllabus of the English syllabus for Agribusiness students. Agribusiness is one of major in University of Jambi, the research setting. The ease access to that Agribusiness study program is one factor why the researchers chose. It is easy because there is several lecturers of English department study program have duty to teach there. Furthermore, this research aimed to develop the existing Agribusiness English syllabus that researcher got from the lecturer document. The process could be told as developing an English syllabus into learning centered syllabus.

1.2. Research question

According to background of the study above, this research answered the main research question, *how is an English learner centered syllabus for Agribusiness syllabus developed?*

1.3. Objective of the Study

This research mainly aimed to draw how the existing syllabuses were developed into learner centered syllabus for Agribusiness students of University of Jambi. Lastly, the research also aimed to reveal what the Agribusiness students of University of Jambi actually needed in learning English.

1.4. Significant of the Study

This research aimed to construct the existing syllabus into learner centered syllabus, so it was practically expected to be as a model of how to construct a learner centered syllabus for undergraduate students, especially undergraduate Agribusiness students. Theoretically however, the research was expected that in the existence activity such constructing a learner-centered syllabus is more theoretical.

1.5. Limitation of the Study

The research was limited by some cases. First, the development of the existing syllabus was delimited by evaluating the existing syllabus in the first phase by only check the presence items. It should be provided as the learner-centered syllabus to the real document without observing the reality in the

classroom. Second, the future syllabus would not be implemented in the classroom in which the observation result as the evaluation, one of step in developing the syllabus, but the syllabus product will be evaluated by the English syllabus expert only.